

# The Library Assistant:

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## THE JANUARY MEETING.

The next meeting of the session will be held by the kind invitation of Mr. Harry Rowlatt, at the Poplar Public Library, 126 High Street, Poplar, on January 11th, at 8 p.m., when our host for the evening will read a paper on "Library Accounts." Mrs. Rowlatt has kindly undertaken to provide light refreshments. All interested in Library work are cordially invited to be present. Trains from Broad Street to Poplar (North London Railway), every fifteen minutes; also from Fenchurch Street; trams from Aldgate to East India Dock Road—nearest point, Poplar Recreation Ground.

## THE DECEMBER MEETING.

Upwards of 40 members and friends were present at the Guildhall Library on Wednesday, December 14th, when Mr. Charles Welch gave "A Talk on Engraving and Engravers as illustrated by the Willshire Bequest in the Guildhall Library." After sketching the history of engraving, and describing the various processes employed, Mr. Welch exhibited a number of the gems of Dr. Willshire's collection. Among these he called special attention to an impression on paste of the Crucifixion, which Dr. Willshire bought in 1871 for £15, and which he considered to be the most valuable engraving in his possession. Another remarkable print is the famous St. Christopher of 1423, the earliest woodcut with an authentic date. On the conclusion of his address, Mr. Welch invited us to inspect a large number of bibliographical treasures belonging to the same collection. The proceedings terminated with very hearty votes of thanks to Mr. Welch for his most interesting and instructive address, moved by Mr. Thorne, and seconded by Mr. Sayers, and to Mr. Briggs, the Chairman of the Library Committee, for his kindness in presiding at the meeting.

At this meeting Mr. J. G. Faraday was elected to fill the vacancy on the Committee.

## AN APPEAL TO MR. CARNEGIE.

BY H. G. SURETIES.

A letter has been received from Mr. Carnegie by Mr. A. H. Dyke-Acland in connection with the free library movement at Scarborough. Mr. Acland was invited by a Committee to open negotiations with Mr. Carnegie with a view to obtaining an offer from him of a lump sum to be presented as a gift to the town, instead of following his usual rule of paying for the erection of a building. In reply, Mr. Carnegie wrote:—

"I have necessarily one rule in dealing with free libraries, which is, to give a suitable sum for a building, providing it is maintained by public taxation, and under this plan I am nearing the thousandth library. I never interfere with local questions. The community which is offered a library must attend to this."

In a further communication, Mr. Carnegie wrote that he "did not initiate the free library movement. If a town had done all in its power by the adoption of the Libraries Acts and the levying of a maximum rate, he was ready to consider the case, but not otherwise. His object was the erection of a public library building, to be used exclusively for library purposes. He did not erect art schools or museums."

The above statement from Mr. Carnegie amounts practically to a recapitulation of what is known amongst librarians and library authorities as "the usual conditions." It is a difficult matter, and savours of presumption to question the methods and aims of Mr. Carnegie in the matter of the provision of public libraries for the community. Mr. Carnegie's aims meet with such universal acclamation that one hesitates to say anything which may be construed as fault-finding. It is, however, an Englishman's privilege to grumble, and I am unaware of any law of nature that exempts librarians and library authorities from a "privilege," which, after all, is often an incentive to greater things. Mr. Carnegie's conditions are so widely known that it is unnecessary to comment in detail on them here, and this brings us straight to the point—are Mr. Carnegie's "conditions" always wise and framed in the best possible interests of the Public Library Cause. By his own acts Mr. Carnegie's sympathy for the Public Library Movement is manifested and consequently it is reasonable to suppose that he would welcome criticism—that is to say criticism which tends in a practical manner to help him to a better understanding of the pressing needs and necessities of some of the older established libraries. Many of these libraries are trying to develop their educational work, but are handicapped for want of funds, for books or better buildings. To such as these Mr. Carnegie's practical sympathy would be a consummation devoutly to be wished, and it is a pregnant question as to whether Mr. Carnegie's practical sympathy expended in this direction would not be productive of more good than the erection of libraries in small, struggling urban districts and parishes, where it is problematical that sufficient money can be raised for the necessary upkeep, the districts being as yet unripe for additional taxation as necessitated by Mr. Carnegie's conditions. The writer has one such in mind, a small district in a southern county, which has been provided, at a cost of £3,000, with a library; yet the rate produces less than £200 a year, out of which has to be paid lighting, cleaning, books and papers, and last, but not least, salaries. Needless to say, this last item is not for the services of a trained librarian. It would be a difficult matter for a trained librarian to keep his head above water on this meagre sum, and it will certainly be interesting to note the financial condition of the library after twelve months' working. Now it is questionable whether the £3,000 that has been expended on this library would not have been capable of infinitely more good had it been given to some struggling and deserving library authority, towards the furtherance of a laudable aim for the better equipment of an established library in one of the more populous towns. A moment's reflection will at least justify a contention that those districts which are the recipients of Mr. Carnegie's generosity, often because it is so "cheap," are not always the most necessitous. We could most of us instance cases where a gift of money from Mr. Carnegie to further the work and aims of the library would be a godsend. Many libraries are burdened with heavy building loans that curtail and diminish the scanty available funds from 25 to 50

per cent. Instead of "dumping" (the term is used for the want of a better) small libraries in localities where the rate is insufficient for their adequate support, would it not be spent to better advantage in the clearing off of some of these building loans and the consequent aiding of experienced and older established libraries in their labour of assisting in the work of educating the proletariat? Briefly, we would appeal to Mr. Carnegie for a more thorough recognition of the value of the work done by older established libraries, whose only sin is that they were "born too soon." This article is not written in any captious spirit, but it is felt that if attention is drawn to the promiscuous scattering of small libraries, incapable of supporting themselves, when older established libraries are languishing for want of funds, it will not have been written in vain. Mr. Carnegie's work needs no commendation. Deservedly so, he merits the deep gratitude of the community at large, and there is no shadow of doubt that his name will rank with the foremost philanthropists—past, present and future. There is a maxim that you should not "look a gift horse in the mouth," but while fully conscious of its applicability in a great many cases, it is doubtful if it is so to the particular one in question.

#### THE DISPLAY AND FILING OF PERIODICALS.

By F. J. P. BURGoyNE.

(Continued.)

Newspapers, owing to their large size, are better displayed upon reading-stand slopes than on ordinary tables, for not only will this method of exhibition allow two whole sheets of printed matter to be visible at once, but it will also enable more than one person at a time to consult the paper if necessary. The reading-stands may be of the usual pattern with slopes for newspapers on two sides, or simply single reading slopes fixed round the walls of the newsroom. Of the two named, the double stands are said to be the more economical as regards newspaper accommodation, but the wall stands are to be preferred where space is available, owing to the entire absence of obstructions in the centre of the room, which allows easy supervision, and at the same time sets free a large area which can be utilized for reading tables and other furniture. The length of reading stand required for the display of an ordinary newspaper is about three feet six inches, but to prevent overcrowding four feet should be allowed. If double stands are used, they should measure eight feet in length, and be fitted with reading slopes rising from the floor at a height of about three feet, and inclined at an angle of sixty degrees. This type of stand will provide space for four of the largest morning papers, and will be of such a height that persons of medium stature can easily see to read them. The newspapers are best fastened to the stands by means of a hinged brass rod which grips the paper when tightened by a thumb-screw underneath the reading slope. Below each newspaper a narrow ledge of wood should be fixed to prevent it from sagging, and if in addition a stout brass rod is held by means of brackets about three inches away from the foot of the slope much will be done to prevent the wear and tear of newspapers generally occasioned by readers resting upon them. The names of the papers should in all cases be affixed in bold letters to the top of each stand for easy identification.

The tables for the display of the smaller periodicals should be strongly made, and of a convenient size. The upper rails of the tables should not be so deep as to interfere with the comfort of the persons using them, and cross rails connecting the table legs near the floor should be avoided, as

they serve only as foot rests on which the reader delights to scrape his boots. A table ten feet long, three feet wide, and thirty-two inches high, will accommodate five persons on each side, and will be found to be of a very suitable size for public reading room purposes.

All periodicals of any importance exhibited on the newsroom tables should be enclosed in cases covered with leather or cloth, and plainly lettered on both sides with the title. Unimportant and occasional periodicals for which no cases are supplied can be displayed and kept together with some degree of order in racks fixed to the walls of the room. These racks are made in a variety of patterns, but the most common kind are simply grooves or ledges set at an angle, in, or on which, the periodicals rest.

If time tables are stored in the newsroom they are best displayed either in a rack specially reserved for them, or hung on hooks screwed into a wooden rail fixed to the wall.

In the magazine room the better class weeklies, monthlies, and quarterlies, should be displayed on tables, only such large magazines as the "Graphic," "Land and Water," etc., having wall stands reserved for them.

The tables used in this room can be of the same size and pattern as those in use for the newsroom, but should in addition be fitted with a low wooden ridge running along the centre of each table, which will ensure a certain amount of privacy to the individual reader, and at the same time be useful for fixing the titles of the various magazines on.

Each magazine should be enclosed in a reading case to protect and keep it clean, and should be attached to the table by means of a chain. Another method adopted by a few libraries of keeping the magazines in something like order, is the plan of allotting to each a different coloured case according to the table to which it belongs. This method—an inferior way of attaining the end effected by chaining the covers to the tables—cannot be recommended unless table space is very limited. The length of table required for a chained magazine should never be less than two feet six inches, and the seating accommodation will therefore be materially less than that given in the newsroom, where only two feet is allowed for each reader. If there is not enough table space for all the magazines, racks can be provided as in the newsroom for their reception, and it will be found very convenient if the ledges whereon the magazines rest are marked with the titles to serve as a guide to the reader when replacing them.

In order to aid readers using the magazine room, it is a good plan to arrange the magazines either in classified order or in strict alphabetical sequence, and as a further guide, a list of the various periodicals to be found in each reading room can be hung in a prominent position. With such aids to readers as these in a reading room, very little direction on the part of the staff will be necessary. The ease with which the work goes on, and the total absence of noise and confusion caused by readers wandering aimlessly about looking for periodicals, must amply repay all concerned for the extra cost and trouble which may have been bestowed on this department.

As in the display of periodicals, their filing in most public libraries leaves much to be desired. Generally relegated to some dark basement, it is often thought quite sufficient to lay the periodicals out in untidy files upon the floor, leaving dust and damp to work what ravages they may. This plan may be all very well where the periodicals are sold at intervals as waste paper, but as many libraries bind up and

keep for reference a large number of their magazines, it is advisable to keep all the loose parts in as good condition as possible.

For the efficient filing of periodicals, I advocate the setting apart of one or more rooms for this purpose alone. These should be shelved from the floor to the ceiling with wide shelves for the reception of the periodicals, which can be arranged in alphabetical or any other classified order. The spaces between the shelves can be hung with bookbinder's cloth, or stout brown paper, to keep the files free from dust, and if the titles of the periodicals resting on the shelves are pasted on the outside of these hangings, very little difficulty will be experienced in locating any particular magazine. Another method of filing periodicals is to provide a number of special cloth-covered boxes for the weekly and monthly magazines, and to keep the newspapers in order, either in piles laying flat on the shelves, or filed on a specially made file. If room is available, however, preference should be given to the first mentioned method of filing periodicals, for not only is time and money saved by its adoption, but tidiness and order in the file-room can always be preserved.

#### PROFESSIONAL EXAMINATION.

The next examination of the Library Association will be held in the first week in May, 1905. In accordance with the regulations relating to the issue of certificates the following subjects for essays have been set for this examination:—

- Section 1. (Literary History). "The imaginative writers of Australia," or "The essays of Addison."
  - Section 2. (Elements of practical Bibliography). "Bibliography of the literature of cataloguing rules, English and foreign."
  - Section 3. (Classification). "Dewey's 'Decimal classification,'" with arguments for and against it; or "The classification of the headings under which the history and topography of Japan should be arranged."
  - Section 4. (Cataloguing). "The evolution of the dictionary catalogue."
  - Section 5. (Library history and organization). "The general policy of book selection for municipal libraries."
  - Section 6. (Practical Library Administration). "Binding materials."
- This essay is also to include draft specification.

The essays themselves are not required before the time of the examination. They should be written on one side of the paper only and there should be a margin on the left-hand side.

Further particulars relating to the examination can be seen in the "Library Association Year Book," or obtained from the Hon. Secretary of the Education Committee, 44a Southwark Bridge Road, S.E.

#### LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CLASSES.

The classes for the Lent Term, to be held at the London School of Economics, will commence on January 18th next, when a course of 11 lectures will be given by Mr. J. D. Brown on Section 6 of the Association's examination syllabus—"Practical Library Administration." Mr. Roberts will give a course of 11 lectures on "Elementary Practical Bibliography," being a continuation of the course commenced in the Michaelmas Term.

Mr. Brown will also conduct a correspondence class on the subject of his lectures at the School of Economics. Full particulars can be obtained on application to the Hon. Secretary of the Education Committee. Intending students who have not yet sent in their names for the correspondence class are requested to do so without any further delay. The fee for the course will be ten shillings.

#### THE COMMITTEE.

The fifth meeting was held on December 21st, and in the absence of Mr. Chambers, the chair was taken by Mr. Thorne. Present: Messrs. Bullen, Faraday, Green, Harris, Poulter, Rees, Rivers, Roebuck, Sayers, Smith, and Thorne.

A satisfactory report was received from the Dinner Sub-Committee, and the ordinary business matters were dealt with.

Three new members were enrolled.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the "*Library Assistant*."

DEAR SIR,—Can you assist me in an endeavour to locate the subject "Optics" correctly in the accepted classification of knowledge.

Generally considered Optics is allocated as a branch of Physics, but I argue that its relationship to Sight is as important as that which it bears to Light, therefore leading me to the conclusion that if the relationship to Light gives it a standing as Physics, surely its treatment of Sight should have consideration under Physiology.

Again, this contention seems strengthened when we consider that Vision is not necessarily dependent upon the presence of light, whereas vision without eyesight is an impossibility.

In conclusion I would draw attention to the subject of Animal Vision, which entirely qualifies this query. I hope to see this answered in the *LIBRARY ASSISTANT* as early as possible.—Yours faithfully,

"CELESTIAL."

#### LIBRARY JOURNALS.

*Boottle Free Library, Museum, and Technical School Journal* for December contains notes on books new and old, a well-annotated list of pictures lent by the National Gallery, a photograph of one of the library hand-carts used for conveying books to and from the local schools, and the usual lists of additions. There are also museum notes, and the continuation of a catalogue of the Chetham Society's publications. A most interesting number.

*Bulletin du Bibliophile et du Bibliothécaire* contains further instalments of the articles on "Petits métiers et cris de Paris," "Les Miniaturistes à l'exposition des Primitifs français," an annotated list of the works of M. Lorédan Larchey, and the continuation of M. Morin's monograph on the Adenets, or Maillets, the famous printers, binders, and booksellers of the 17th and 18th centuries; whilst M. Chambon contributes an obituary notice of M. Jules de Chantepie du Désert, Curator of the Bibliothèque de l'Université de Paris, à la Sorbonne, and Inspector-General of Libraries, who died on the 8th of last month. M. Chatelain of the Bibl. de l'Université de Paris is to succeed his late Chief at the Sorbonne.

*Croydon Readers' Index* opens with a careful and comprehensive essay on the development of the English drama, by Mr. W. A. Peplow; and Mr. J. D. Stewart contributes a reading list on London, which is a model of what a reading list should be.

The *Plumstead Library Catalogue* is in the dictionary form, and gives evidence of very careful work. An excellent feature is the insertion of the date of original publication of the great classics; the method deserves to be more generally adopted. In the preface, "readers are desired to consult the staff when they do not find in the catalogue the books they require. The staff is always willing to guide readers in the choice of books, and to note their wants with a view to supplementing the books already in the library." The inversion of the author's name in title entries strikes us as unnecessary and somewhat confusing; but this is a small matter. It is to be regretted that a catalogue so excellent in many ways should not be annotated. Mr. Chambers is to be congratulated on a painstaking piece of work.

#### NOTES AND COMMENTS.

**Anderston Library, Glasgow.**—On the authority of Lord Provost Sir John Ure Primrose, the new Anderston District Library, formally opened recently by Councillor Bilsland, is the finest building which has yet been erected in Glasgow as a district library, and is the first that has been dedicated to books and to knowledge alone. The other libraries have been housed in conjunction with police halls and other departments of civic economy.

His Lordship presided at the opening ceremony, which was attended by a number of members of the Corporation and by representative people in the ward. The Town Council, said the Lord Provost, probably never set its hand to a higher work than when it sought in every division of the city to make the avenues of knowledge and information the birthright and the freely-used gift of every citizen. All knowledge, his Lordship declared, was useful, even the ephemeral literature of the day. The men who did not seek to come into living contact with the thoughts of contemporary men and their deliberations upon social, political and commercial topics, deprived themselves of the fuller equipment that would make them more capable units of the community.

A brief sketch of the history of the movement was given by Mr. Alex. Murray, convener of the Libraries Committee, who remarked that after the whole scheme of public libraries was dealt with Glasgow would have the most complete scheme of municipal libraries in the United Kingdom. There would then be fifteen district libraries and two reading-rooms.

The library was formally opened by Councillor Bilsland.

The library is a two-storied building in red sandstone, situated in Macintyre Street, west of Anderston Cross. The general reading-room is situated on the lower floor, with seats and desks for 80 readers. There is here a reference library of about 500 volumes. The lending library, which is reached directly from the main entrance, has already 10,000 volumes in position.

**Birkenhead.**—Mr. Andrew Carnegie has intimated his willingness to present £20,000 to the Birkenhead Corporation—£15,000 to pay for the erection of a central library building, and £2,500 each for two branch libraries. The need for library extension in Birkenhead has long been recognised, and the Library Committee have been sorely taxed to keep pace with the demands of the community. The present central library

was opened forty years ago, and a few years since the reading-room and children's library were transferred to premises opposite. Even with the additional accommodation thus provided, there are still thousands of books for which room cannot be found.

**Chelmsford.**—Lord Rayleigh laid the foundation stone of the Public Library, School of Art, and Museum, on Wednesday, December 21st. The building will cost £8,000, towards which Mr. Carnegie has given £2,500, and the Essex Education Committee £1,000.

**Hornsey.**—Mr. George Potter, F.R.M.S., a newly co-opted member of the Hornsey Public Libraries Committee, gave an admirable lecture on Wednesday, December 14th, on "Hornsey in the Past," illustrated with lantern views. The lecture was attentively listened to by an audience of close on 400 persons. At the conclusion a vote of thanks to Mr. Potter was proposed by the Town Clerk, seconded by Mr. James Duff Brown, Islington's first librarian. Alderman Agnew, chairman of the Public Libraries Committee, occupied the chair.

**Bootle.**—The Education Committee has made a grant of £50 to the Free Library Committee for the replacement of certain worn-out books, used in connection with the scheme of fortnightly book deliveries from the Central Library for scholars in attendance at the ten elementary schools of the borough. In addition to an assistant, the Education Committee provides a neat covered hand cart for the transit of books between school and library; but the general supervision of the system is entrusted to the Borough Librarian. The teachers take much interest in directing the children's reading, and they are freely supplied with catalogues and special lists to assist them in their laudable undertaking. A copy of the "Catalogue of Books for the Young" is also prominently exhibited at each of the schools. Upwards of 3,000 books are available for the use of scholars, and last year over 11,000 issues were recorded. The system, established in 1894, is described in Volume II. of *Special Reports on Educational Subjects*, issued by the Education Department.

**Lewisham.**—The Lower Sydenham Library is practically completed. The estimate was for £5,778, and the actual expenditure £5,777. Bills of quantities for the new branch library at Brockley are to be prepared.

**Library Bulletins Printed Gratis.**—Messrs. Willis & Co., 22 & 24 Lamb's Buildings, Bunhill Row, E.C., have forwarded specimen copies of quarterly journals, containing lists of additions to the libraries, which they have undertaken to print for the Chelsea and Kingston Borough Councils, free of charge for two years. The lists are well printed on good paper, and are in every way very creditable productions. We understand that Messrs. Willis are ready to undertake similar catalogues not only in London districts, but in country towns.

**Plumstead.**—On December 17th Mr. John Morley opened the new Plumstead Library, partly the gift of Mr. Carnegie, who contributed £14,000 for libraries at Plumstead and Eltham. Of this sum £9,000 was spent on the present building, which cost £14,000 in all. The building is situated on the south side of the High Street, and consists of a news-room 56 feet by 24 feet, a magazine room 29 feet by 24 feet, a lending library 64 feet by 32 feet, with shelf accommodation for 20,000 volumes, a ladies' room 21 feet by 18 feet, and a juvenile library 34 feet by 21 feet. There is also a reference department capable of accommodating 6,500 volumes, and a large museum or lecture room. The library was designed by the Borough

Engineer, and is a most handsome structure. From a monograph on the library, prepared by Mr. Bond, Chief Librarian of the Woolwich Libraries, included in the programme of the opening ceremony, we learn that the lending department will begin with a stock of 10,289 volumes, acquired at a cost of £1,700; and that the nucleus of the reference library will be formed by books transferred from the Central Library.

In the course of his eloquent address, Mr. Morley said:

Libraries had different objects for different men, and must be constructed on different principles for different men. The scholar wanted one set of books: their master, the man in the street, wanted another set of books—very often, he thought, the man in the street would be all the better if he did want a different set of books. They went to libraries for all sorts of purposes—for rest, for knowledge, for stimulation, for inspiration—and he did not know what better means there were, outside the great guiding forces of human life and character, for rest, for stimulation, for inspiration, than access to a well-chosen set of books. In his time he had had to perambulate in England amongst what was called the middle class—he hated this distinction of classes—and he was constantly appalled at the shocking trumpery that he found on the shelves of those who were kind enough to entertain him on those occasions. Everyone talked of Shakespeare, Milton, Bacon and so forth, but he wondered how many copies of Shakespeare, of Milton, or of Bacon's essays they would find in people's houses. Then he asked himself, by the way, how many in that room, if they were told they could not leave till they had pointed out what, in their view, were the great passages in Shakespeare, or the great lines in Milton, or the great words of wisdom from Bacon, would ever get out of the room. He was not at all confident that there would be many.

Everybody who was able to possess anything beyond bread and cheese and clothing ought to possess three or four or five books, and they would be surprised, he thought, how very slim the volumes would be which contained the gems and the pure gold of literature. It was a great mistake to think that they could not enter into the treasures of literature unless they possessed a large library. Very few books would do the business, if rightly chosen. In the new library fiction filled nearly twice as large a space as history and biography, but he did not care so far as it promoted sympathy and good humour. There was something to be said for fiction. Their prosaic lives needed all the stir and imagination that could be given them by Walter Scott, Dumas, Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Jane Austen, Mrs. Gaskell, and all the other admirable story tellers. Some of the characters of Scott and the poets were as real to us as any of the great actors in history. Comparisons between men of action and men of letters were idle. They were not always very fair, and were rather meaningless. He was reading the other day that the world of books was a world of shadows. In a sense it was true. We were all shadows. But great ideas launched into the world were not shadows—they were the substance. Would any man say that Napoleon Bonaparte was a substance and Goethe and Byron but transient shadows? That Pitt and Fox and Canning and Castlereagh were the substance and Scott and Shelley and Wordsworth mere phantoms? It would be very wrong if any man said any such thing. . . . If he might preach on a Saturday instead of waiting until the morrow he would say: Pray get it into your heads that a library is a book representing the feelings and impulses of man in all times and ages. All the leading facts of life were there. All the differences between man and man were there, all the differences between the ages and ages of the world were there. The tears and laughter of mankind and the labours of mankind were all in the library. The useless sacrifices—of which there were so many in history—the idle dreams, with all their mischiefs, were

there. The strong and steadfast efforts of men and women for good, with all their blessings and all their glories, they were there, too. The whole overwhelming drama of humanity was there. To be sensible of this was what somebody or another had called the feel of a library. He entirely went with a friend of his who told him that when at night he turned down the lamp of his library and turned the key and left all the procession of saints and sages, warriors and martyrs, the champions of freedom and justice, those who had been trampled down and had fallen and those who had succeeded, those who had been the torchbearers of truth—as he left them in sublime solitude and darkness, it was then that he felt, more than in the working day, the true pathos of mankind and the real mystery of time. In conclusion, Mr. Morley said that the defect of democracy was a deficiency in reverence.—*Westminster Gazette*.

**Spalding.**—The District Council have passed a resolution to rescind the acceptance of an offer of Mr. Carnegie for £800 and the adoption of the Free Libraries Act, but as the majority was under two thirds, the original resolution stands for the present.

**Swansea.**—Some time ago Mr. Carnegie offered £8,000 towards the erection of four branch libraries at Swansea. The present rate is inadequate and a poll of the ratepayers was arranged on the proposal to levy an additional 4d. rate for the new buildings. The project has, however, been defeated, 10,605 voting against the proposed increased rate, and 3,119 for; majority against, 7,486.

**Tynemouth.**—A meeting of the Northumberland and Durham Association of Library Assistants, a young society which is an offshoot of the Northern Counties Library Association, was held recently, under the presidency of Mr. J. A. Charlton Deas, F.R.Hist.S., of the Public Library, Sunderland. The members were received by Mr. A. Hair, sub-librarian, who referred to the fact that this was the first occasion on which any body of librarians had ever paid a visit, although Tynemouth was the first on Tyneside to adopt the Acts, and put them in operation in 1869. The following papers were read and discussed:—"Librarianship as a Profession for Women," by Mr. W. E. Hurford (Newcastle); "Some Humours of a Public Library," by Mr. J. Oliver (Newcastle); "Infection—Safety Precautions in Public Libraries," by Mr. Richard Howe (Tynemouth). The latter paper showed that in this Borough, and in general, the utmost care was exercised in this matter by the sanitary officers and the library staff, and that while library assistants throughout the kingdom, in constant contact with the books, had never in any single instance been known to have contracted infectious diseases by such means, the public confidence should not be shaken by the cries of the alarmist which we occasionally heard raised. Keeping the books clean and in good condition was one of the best means of retaining the confidence of borrowers. An inspection of the library afterwards took place, and the general neatness and cleanliness of the rooms was the subject of much favourable comment.

**West Calder.**—Anything that tends to the multiplication of public speeches, Lord Rosebery declared on Nov. 24th, to be a curse to the country. He was speaking in the evening at West Calder, after having opened a new Carnegie library. The subject upon which he had to speak (books) had, he said, been drained to the dregs. Knowledge was power, but that did not necessarily mean book knowledge. Book knowledge was only a part of the knowledge that constituted power. Books were excellent things; it would be high treason if he were to deny that, coming there to open a free library, but a gluttony of books was just as bad as a

surfeit of anything else, and there were a great many excellent people he knew in this world who spent all their days in reading, and who were of no use to themselves or to anybody else. The fact was that an appetite for reading without digesting was as unwholesome as any other form of gluttony. The man of vigorous life among men would beat the man of books always and at everything in this world. Libraries, however, gave them the tools with which they could work out their own salvation. But books could also be an end in themselves. The man with a happy taste for books could come in, tired and soured though he might be, and fall into the arms of some great author, who would raise him from the ground and take him into a new heaven and a new earth, where he would forget his bruises and rest his limbs, and return to the world a fresh and happy man. The best of that refreshment was that it did not require the assistance of whisky or any other stimulant. Whisky was incompatible with the refreshment of which he spoke—a quiet pipe was a different thing. It might aid not immaterially in the process.

No limitation of means could in these days excuse anybody from not buying books, but he distinguished between books to be read and books to be bought. They read in order to see whether the book was worth buying. He found two further classes of books—the books that they borrowed from friends and returned, and the books they borrowed and did not return. The non-returning of books had ended more friendships and terminated more affections than any other cause of which he was cognisant. The man who borrowed one volume out of a set of volumes and never returned it was a man who should be treated like vermin—trapped or shot at sight, or any other of the punishments which might be extended to the lowest and vilest of mankind.

His ideal index would be that which told them the best book to read on any subject that they might ask for, but his fear was that they would get nobody to frame any such index because his life would not be safe.

There was another index that he was anxious for. He wanted a Committee that should frame an index of books that were superseded, and which they might get rid of from their shelves. The great writers of old gradually disappear under the super-incumbent—he would not say rubbish, because he was an author himself—but the super-incumbent matter, just as Pompeii was shrouded by the ashes and lava of Vesuvius.

He thought that in literature they needed one who should act the part of the Muezzin on the Mosque, summoning the faithful Mohammedans to prayers—one who should raise his voice and recall the names of good books and good authors which stood in danger of being forgotten. As the Muezzin was usually incapable of other work, physical or mental, if any such official were appointed he was thinking of applying for the place. He would think the evening of his life extremely well spent by trying to point out those authors who in his judgment, and in that of many better than himself, were in some danger of being neglected in these days.—*Daily Chronicle*.

**Westminster. Memorial to Mr. W. Ewart, M.P.**—On 16th December the Mayor of Westminster, Major-General Lord Cheylesmore, unveiled a marble bust of the late Mr. William Ewart, M.P., the promoter of the first Public Libraries Acts, in the large reading room of the Public Library, Great Smith Street, which has been presented to the Westminster City Council by Mr. J. Passmore Edwards. The Rev. F. Harcourt Hillersdon, the Chairman of the Libraries Committee, who presided, said it was fitting that such a memorial of Mr. Ewart should be placed in the Great Smith Street Library, as this Library was the first opened in the Metropolis under the Libraries Act of 1855. The Act was adopted by the

old Westminster parishes of St. Margaret and St. John in 1856, and the Library opened on 10th March, 1857, in premises on the other side of the street, the present building being opened in 1893. Mr. Passmore Edwards, in acknowledging the vote of thanks moved by Lord Cheylesmore, said that he had had many opportunities of working with the late Mr. Ewart, and he expressed his admiration of the capital portrait which the artist had produced. The bust is the work of Mr. A. White, and was executed under the direction of Mr. G. J. Frampton, R.A.

**Sunday Opening.**—The St. Martin's Library is to be opened on Sundays for three months on trial.

**Women in Public Libraries.**—The growth of Carnegie and other libraries opens up employment for a good many women bookishly inclined. To obtain employment in a library there are no entrance examinations to be passed. The Committee advertises for assistants and selects those who appear most suitable. If an assistant wishes to get on, however, he or she would do well to try and secure the Library Association's certificate, which is granted to those who pass an examination in bibliography and Latin translation, French, English and Latin literary history, and library management. Salaries vary according to the ideas of the borough council or vestry in each district, but, as a rule, commence at 10s. a week, and rise to £80 or £90 per annum. To obtain more, the assistant must qualify for a sub-librarianship or librarianship. —*Sum.*

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#### NEW MEMBERS.

**Senior.**—Mr. J. Bailey, Central Library, Hampstead; Mr. E. H. Matthews, Public Library, Exeter.

**Junior.**—Mr. J. Hodgson, Public Library, Tottenham.

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#### APPOINTMENTS.

**BROWN, Mr. J. D.,** Chief Librarian, Finsbury, to be Chief Librarian, Islington.

**\*DALLIMORE, Mr. Frank,** Mitchell Library, Glasgow, to be Sub-Librarian, Wimbledon.

\*Member of the L.A.A.

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#### ADDRESSES.

**Chairman and Hon. Treasurer**—Mr. W. G. Chambers, Public Library, Plumstead. (Telephone—45 Woolwich).

**Hon. Secretary**—Mr. Geo. E. Roebuck, St. George's Library, 236 Cable Street, E.

**Hon. Secretary Education Sub-Committee**—Mr. W. C. Berwick Sayers, Public Library, Croydon.

**Hon. Librarian**—Mr. A. H. Carter, Public Library, St. Martin's Lane, W.C.